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THE  
Present CASE  
OF

Mr. *William Whiston*,

Humbly Represented:

IN A  
LETTER  
TO THE

Reverend the Clergy

Now Assembled in

CONVOCAATION.

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By *Michael Maistaire.* K 11

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LONDON: Printed for *H. Clements*, at the  
*Half-Moon* in *St. Paul's Church-yard*. 1711.

THE  
FIFTH  
CHURCH

OF THE

REVEREND

THE

LETTER

TO THE

REVEREND THE CHURCH

OF THE

CONVOCATION

By Robert Williams.

LONDON: Printed for H. Bland, at the  
Print-Shop in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1795.

TO THE  
 Reverend *SYNOD* of the Clergy  
 now assembled in Convocation.

*Reverend and Learned Sirs,*

**W**E are not only allow'd but bidden by God himself to put up our Petitions to his Throne of Grace in time of Need ; tho' he already, much better than we ourselves, knows our Dangers and Wants, and is as willing as able to remove the one and supply the other. I may therefore without Offence make my submissive Application to those who are Heaven's Ambassadors in behalf of our common Lord's and Mother's Cause, Christ's and the Church's ; the *greatest Cause* that can concern us Men. This Address proceeds from meer Zeal, not from any Doubt but that the Reverend Body of our religious Clergy must needs be sensible, how pernicious it will prove to the Ecclesiastical Establishment, if a *speedy Stop* be not put to Heresy ; I make



no question but that you are generally and earnestly bent upon *this*, and whatever else is expedient for the Welfare of Christianity. My Zeal has been so much the more quicken'd, because I have been inform'd that this *Arian*, this *Achan*, who troubles our *Israel*, has written to the most Reverend the Two Metropolitans that he may be heard before he be (as he has all the reason imaginable to apprehend, and we to hope he'll be) Censur'd. And here with a most profound Deference to our worthy Clergy's Piety and Wisdom, I beg Leave to expostulate against this Man's unreasonable Demands, who can have no Pretence with any Face of applying himself to their Graces upon any other Account but to implore the Forgiveness of the Church, whose Faith and Settlement he has for several Years endeavour'd to wound and disturb. None certainly will expect that our Reverend Senate shall throw away their precious Time, and (upon a Point solemnly argu'd, decided, and peaceably acquiesc'd in long ago) enter into a Dispute with one single stubborn Heretick ;  
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not that I would call in question the Meekness and Condescension of our Spiritual Governors in every thing which might conduce to the saving of even one single Soul. But here to what purpose will it be to engage with one who has yet given no Token of any readiness to hearken to sound Instruction and Reproof? He has in the Title-Page of his historical Preface inserted these Words out of St. *John* 7. 24. *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous Judgment.* A very uncommon and not over-modest way of bespeaking his Judges (for to you he dedicates that Preface) to suspect the Righteousness of your Judgment! The Perusal of that Book will soon discover to any unprejudic'd Reader that it is no new thing with him to assume much more than what belongs to him. But what means he by, or how wrests he the fore-cited Passage? Calls he a constant Agreement of Doctrine for so many Ages *Appearance*? Hath the united Belief of so many national Churches been only *οὐκ ὡς*, a faint false *Outside and Shadow*, and not rather *καὶ ὡς*, and *καὶ ὡς*, a *Sub-*  
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stance,

*stance, Evidence, and full assurance of Faith?*  
 Shall he presume to impose his crude undigested Medley of Heresies as righteous? Shall our Church be taken up in convincing him of what every true Christian is already convinc'd of? When he at the same time declares that he's resolv'd to die for his blasphemous Assertions, tho' 'tis not a bold impious Resolution and an heathenish Defiance of Death, but a good Cause and an humble pious Resignation to the Will of God makes the Martyr. He has affirm'd that "He never expected  
 "any Answer to his Papers, because he  
 "was *fully satisfy'd* they were *really unan-*  
 "*swerable*. How then dares he trifle with his Superiors, and demand to be heard? What would he be heard for? Has not he own'd his Heresy publickly in Print, and subscrib'd his Name to *Arianism*, and as publickly told us he can't be convinc'd? What else is meant by these Expressions, *fully satisfy'd, really unanswerable*? Let any of his Favourers and Patrons judge whether this be a fair and modest Proposal; if he's resolv'd to persist, and persuaded he's past Conviction, there's  
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no room left for disputing or hearing, unless he designs, as he has by Letters, so by Word of Mouth, and Face to Face, to defy and affront at once all his Superiors met together in a Body. Besides are we in a Heathen or Christian Country? We have (Thanks be to God) an Advantage which the Church had not yet when the great Council of *Nice* combated with and overthrew *Arianism*, that Heathenism is no where openly profess'd in this part of the World; and tho' the Extent and Power of the *Roman* Empire is considerably streighten'd and impair'd, yet what Ground the Monarchy has lost, is sufficiently made up by what the Gospel has gain'd; and the Worship of the *one* God has triumph'd over that of the *many*. No Wonder if, where and when Heathenism was not totally suppress'd, that poisonous Root of *Arianism* grew up, which is but a Slip, of the other, and by the Devil attempted to be grafted upon Christianity, in order to destroy and supplant it. But is it fitting now, in the broad Noon-day Light and Sun-shine of Christianity, to bring *Arianism* on the

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Stage



Stage, and make it a controverted Case, whether we must worship *one only*, or *two Gods*? For this is the plain State of the Question?

If God the Father be the only one God, exclusively to God the Son: If God the Son be less than God the Father; If the Original Supreme Worship is due only to God the Father: then there are **TWO GODS**, a greater and a lesser; which are the Objects of two sorts of Worship, one Original and Supreme, the other Derivative and Subordinate; Such a Distinction of Worship as *λατρεία* and *δουλεία*; which the *Romish Church* has found out to justify her unwarranted Worship and Invocation of Saints and Angels.

These are the direct and unavoidable Conclusions of *Arianism*; and therefore the Question must be this; not only whether we shall renounce the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and of all standing Christian Churches in the World; but whether we shall turn **HEATHENS**; and instead of the **ONE GOD**, whom from the very beginning  
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of the World we have been taught and commanded to adore, at last embrace **POLYTHEISM**. It would be a great Disgrace for a Christian Country, to have such a Question publicly argued, which deserves to be determined no otherwise than by the Censure of the Blasphemer, who presumes to start it. Let none blame me for my Warmth, but such as are Cool and Indifferent, whether they had best own and worship **ONE or TWO GODS**. If there be any Wretch who is so lost to all Sense of Religion, and has Face enough to proclaim himself such, I think he's more to be pitied than argued with; his Conversion Pray'd for, rather than his Conviction attempted. Nothing under a Miracle can open the Eyes of him, who by the brightest Light of Gospel-Revelation cannot, or rather will not see, what some Honest Heathens, by the glimmering Light of Nature, could discover and oppose by the Loss of Life it self, the absurd Error of multiplying the Godhead. It happens rarely that an *ἀνυπερβόλητος φιλόσοφος* can transform an Heretick, who, like some of the  
Jews.

Jews, whom St. *Paul* himself was not able to persuade concerning Jesus, neither by the Law of *Moses*, nor by the Prophets, is fallen under the deplorable Calamity of resolving to shut his Ears, as well as close his Eyes against the Word of God.

We ought, according to the Apostle's Rule, to be zeaiously affected in a good Matter. And can any Matter be better than the Unity of God, and the Eternal Divinity of our Saviour? Are Traytors, in Civil Impeachments, admitted to dispute the Title of the Prince against whom they have conspired? Is not it a sufficient Ground for Condemnation, if they own, or are convicted of the Treason? Hath not this Heretick, this Spiritual Incendiary and Traytor, own'd; And does he not still maintain his denial of our Lord's eternal Divinity?

He seems, by soliciting, to be heard and admitted to Dispute, to have a design of gaining Time. It is likely, if this were granted him, a Dispute with such a Self-conceited Heretick, and unanswerable, not (because he can't have, but



but because he will *take*, no Answer) will spend much time, and may be, spin itself out to the end of the Synod's Session. So he having compassed his Ends of evading the Censure, by prolonging the Dispute, will, as he has done already, and with a more plausible Pretence, make his Brags, that he is indeed Unanswerable. The Ecclesiastical History informs us, how many Tricks Hereticks were wont to use, into how many Shapes (like the Old cunning Serpent) they turn'd themselves to slip from the force of those Arguments, wherewith the Primitive Fathers held them fast, and to procrastinate the Condemnation, which they could not avoid. The Pains of the good Fathers were crown'd with this Blessing, that through due Censures the Heresy was quell'd; very seldom that the Hereticks was Reformed. If it should happen, that for want of Time this *Arian* did 'scape Uncensur'd, this would embolden his and others Infidelity, when a timely Condemnation may, in a great measure, damp it. And if it be thought equally necessary to Confute, as to Condemn, since the one requires much more time than the other; is it not safer, and less dangerous, to postpone and venture the first, which may be done without, than the last, which can't be so effectually perform'd but by the whole Synod? Besides, tho' the Church has thought fit, at the first starting of every Heresy, to batter it with Arguments, before she threw it down with her Authority; yet, if the same Heresy is revived again

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(as it is now) without offering at any other Reasons than what were sufficiently baffled before, what need is there to use any other Weapon than that of Authority? Again, since the Church of *England*, in the Eighth Article, affirms the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds ought to be thoroughly receiv'd and believ'd, and may be prov'd by most certain Warrants of Holy Scripture; and since those two Creeds expressly Condemn those Heresies; I most humbly conceive, that the Church of *England*, represented by the Synod of the Clergy, is not now the Dispute, whether the Faith of those two Creeds be True, or False. If the Church of *England* be Orthodox, her Definitions in Religion are no more to be question'd, than those of *Euclid* in Mathematicks: And if she be not Orthodox, we have ever since the Reformation had, and have still, a True Church and Religion to seek; we are all in an Error, and therefore want a Reformation more than ever. This is the condition, which this Heretick, if he had his will, would reduce us to; and every honest Professor of the Church of *England* must, if he be true, and not wavering in his Faith, heartily wish and pray, that his Blasphemous Mouth and Pen may be Stopt. The Enemies of our Church, are always watching for our Halting; and both Schismaticks and Papists (for neither of them are so bad as to favour *Arianism*) will catch the least, tho' but seeming, Opportunity, to traduce the wise Deliberations, and wary Proceedings of the Reverend Synod, in a Business of so great Moment and Danger, under

der the odious name of *Tardiness*, and improve the most excusable *Delays*, to the Reproach of our Holy Communion.

Our Civil Government has had so much Regard to the Preservation of this great fundamental Article of Christianity, that in the Act for exempting Protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the Penalties of certain Laws, a Clause is inserted, that nothing therein contain'd shall extend or be construed to extend to give any Ease, Benefit or Advantage, to any Person that shall deny in his Preaching or Writing the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity as it is declared in the Articles of Religion. In the same Act a Profession of Christian Belief is required to be subscribed in these Words. *I A. B. profess Faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his Eternal Son the true God, and in the holy Spirit, one God blessed for evermore.*

This Man has denied that \* the Append. p. 9  
three Persons collectively taken are the  
one God of the Christian Religion; † Preface. p. 9  
that † the Son is the Eternal God, the true God.

Now therefore whether the publick denying of these Points is by the Law, while this Act is in force, allowable; I appeal to Lawyers as well as Divines. If upon this any pert Sceptick shall with a careless indifferent Air of pretended and mistaken Moderation start such a Query as that, which, when a very learned Animadverter charged Tritheism upon the late Dr. Sherlock, was put by a certain Person of no low (whatever he might be in Principles) Place and Dignity.



nity, *What would he have us do? Would he have us burn him?*

My Reply is this, That I am neither Presbyterian nor Papist, and therefore not for co-ercing this Heretick by violent Persecution, or any *Temporal* Fire; let him live to *repent*, and so avoid the *Eternal* one. But I wish however that what he has already publish'd in Print may be condemn'd; and if he be harden'd in his Heresy, and resolv'd *not to repent* of it, that he may be hinder'd from uttering or publishing any more of such heretical Doctrines; if he will not abjure them, yet let him keep them to himself, and not *insult the Church and State*, by daring to print them, and that by Subscription, in Defiance of *both*. There can be no Persecution in this, I may without Harm wish it, still under Correction, and with an entire Submission of my private Judgment to the Determination of the higher Powers in this Matter, to whose Decrees I will ever, while I live, pay, without any equivocating Shifts, all due Obedience.

The very Solemnity of this Season, is a very cogent inducement to all good Christians to be Zealous in this Matter. The Church in her Service for this Holy and Great Week, lively sets before our Eyes, and earnestly recommends to our Meditation and Devotion, the History of our Lord's Sufferings. Can we observe, how he was Betray'd, and Betray our Faith to Heresy? Can we read, how he was Reviled by the *Roman* Soldiers with the Pageantry of a Mock-Royalty; and patiently see him Mock'd by an insolent Hereretick, with a Sham-Divinity?

nity? They, instead of a Scepter, put a Reed in his right Hand, Crown'd him with Thorns, bow'd the Knee, and cry'd, *Hail King of the Jews*. And does not this *Arian* even out-do the Parallel, when he allows him the Name of God, but denies him \* Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Invisibleness, Greatness, Truth, Immortality, Wisdom, Goodness, and Life itself? Without all these, what is Divinity but an empty Title, a meer Shadow, a Nothing? Shall we exercise our Indignation against the Jews for Crucifying his Human Body, and shew no Resentment against this Heretick, who (as it were) Crucifies his Divinity, by limiting it, degrading it into the condition of an Human Rational Soul, and subjecting it to a share of the same Indignities and Sufferings, which his Human Body was expos'd to? Can we by a due celebration of the approaching Festival of *Easter*, prepare our selves to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, which our Lord ascended up to Heaven to send down, and through God's Grace acknowledge the Trinity, and worship the Unity, to which Mystery our Church has dedicated in her Liturgy, almost half of the whole Year? And can we in the mean time, suffer the Divinity of the Holy Ghost to be Questioned, and the Trinity scornfully Abused? It certainly behoves us all who name the Name of Christ, to set our Helping Hands to the pulling down of this Heresy, that our Prayers may be heard, which by the Direction of our Church, are on *Good-Friday* put up for the Conversion of Hereticks.

\* Read Mr. Whiston's Preface, pag. 7.



Hereticks. And may the Example of the Good Repenting Thief invite to Repentance this *Arian* Thief, who has robb'd his Saviour's two Natures, the one of its Eternity, the other of its Soul.

I shall now close this my most humble Address, by begging you to excuse the Earnestness of it, which, if it be look'd upon as needless, is however Seasonable, Harmless, and Well-meant.

*I am, with all due Respect,*

*Reverend S I R S,*

*Your Most Humble and*

*Obedient Servant,*

*Michael Maittaire.*